Many thanks to all the contributors. It's been a real pleasure editing your submissions. Special thanks to Lucy Ball, Dan Gallichan, Russell Ewings and Catherine Smura for proof reading.
A few years ago, I found myself on an unexpected East African safari. Naively, I thought, “Okay, I’ll go to the Serengeti, see some lions, tigers, and bears and then I’ll return home.” But the safari held many surprises for me, least of which was the fact that, in the African wild, there are no indigenous tigers and bears. And when my holiday ended, I was fascinated not by lions but by the never-ending journey of the wildebeest.

Imagine yourself in the shoes – well, hooves of the wildebeest. You live not in Oxfordshire but in the wilderness where three months of sporadic rain are followed by nine months of drought. The water you drink evaporates and the grass you eat withers. There is no food for miles. Well, actually, there is food – you. You are the traveling source of food for predators that can run two to three times faster than you. For them, you are not merely a snack. You’re a super-sized deluxe meal – to go.

Each year, the Serengeti (which means endless plain in the Masai language) becomes the setting for the world’s most amazing wildlife spectacle – the great wildebeest migration. From Tanzania’s vast plains to Kenya’s Masai Mara, nearly 1.5 million wildebeest, relentlessly pursued by predators, migrate in a clockwise fashion over 1,800 miles.

Some suggest that an instinctive desire for fresh grazing prompts the wildebeest to relocate during the dry season. Others argue that the migration is triggered by rising salt levels in the shrinking water supplies. Regardless of the catalyst, wildebeest must leave the short grass plains for areas where they are more vulnerable to predator ambush. Over 200,000 antelopes and other animals also join in the migration. Among them, the zebra, with its acute hearing, is an invaluable travel companion. Combined with the wildebeest’s sharp eyesight, they form a symbiotic relationship which helps to keep both alert for predators.

Wildebeest Connochaetes taurinus (large ungulates weighing anywhere from 250 to 600 pounds) are on the move day and night tirelessly crossing rivers and lakes in such huge masses that many are injured, lost, or killed. Migration is at its peak in May when, in the open woodlands, they feed. In November, they return south to the Serengeti.

There is no real beginning to a wildebeest’s journey. Its life is a constant pilgrimage, an endless search for greener pastures.
The only beginning is at the moment of birth. Each year, between late January and mid-March, an estimated 400,000 wildebeest calves are born. Unlike other antelopes, wildebeests do not hide their young. The calves, which are able to stand within minutes of their birth, are encouraged to keep up with the herd. There they find strength in numbers, with a smaller risk of being on the menu. If a calf loses its mother, it will follow whatever is closest – a zebra, a jeep, or even a predator, but in the latter case, probably not for long. Fortunate wildebeests survive for up to 20 years.

Also known as a gnu (pronounced ‘new’) because of the sound it makes, the wildebeest has a large box-like head, dark mane, and a long tail. Both males and females have horns that are close together at the base, but curve outward, then inward and slightly backward. The body appears lopsided, as the front end is sturdily built while the hindquarters are slim. Because of its appearance and spirited behaviour, Dutch settlers in South Africa named the animal wildebeest or ‘wild beast’. Another, less charitable nickname is ‘clown of the savannah’. In Swahili it is known as Nyumbu Ya Montu.

Wildebeest migration is a journey that not even man can halt. Myles Turner, former Deputy Chief Game Warden of Serengeti National Park recalled that in the early 1960’s, the government, using a long barbed wire fence, tried to stop the wildebeest from moving into Ngorongoro. “They tried to interfere with what thousands of animals had done for thousands of years,” Miles glared at the old fence line with satisfaction. “It’s marvellous the way those animals smashed it flat. I use the fence posts for firewood now.”

Sadly, there is but one ending to a wildebeest’s fantastic journey. Not only have wildebeests learned to follow their food, their predators have learned to follow them. Wildebeest are the preferred prey of lions and spotted hyenas. Both are skilled hunters, despite the latter’s reputation as a scavenger. In fact, the spotted hyenas (also known as the ‘laughing’ hyenas because of their cry) pursue game in packs and they can crush bones with their powerful teeth and jaws.

Its life is a constant pilgrimage, an endless search for greener pastures.

I witnessed one wildebeest who met its fate when attacked by a pack of lionesses and I discovered that there is a hierarchy in deciding who eats first. Although the lionesses do the hunting, the male lion eats first, followed by lionesses, cubs, hyenas, jackals, and even vultures. Anyone who breaks the dining etiquette by jumping the queue is in for a rude awakening. I returned the next day to see what was left of the unfortunate creature. It had been completely consumed. Even the bones, thanks to the hyenas, had been eaten.

My safari is long since over. I’ve returned to the comfort and safety of the Shire where, luckily, my greatest danger seems to be getting run over on Cowley Road. But for the wildebeest, the great migration remains a perilous struggle to survive. It’s what thousands of animals have done for thousands of years.
By Thursday afternoon, I often feel haggard. I’m tired of working on my thesis, and exhausted by running in and out of various seminars only vaguely related to what I’m doing while madly thinking of adequate small-talk topics to fill those awkward moments with my supervisors. Conclusive research that will let me finish my thesis seems ever-elusive, and academia appears to be full of nothing but grumbling, back-stabbing, unhappy people. My writing starts to slow down to a painful trickle, five words written only to agonize and edit it back to nothing. The Bodleian library is packed full of smelly students who insist on reserving the books I need, sniffling and sighing and shuffling so loudly I can’t concentrate on reading the book that is a summary of a brilliant thesis I would never manage to write, by someone who has a job for which I would never manage to even be interviewed for.

Just before 4 o’clock, I take my bike and cycle up Cowley Road, past Tesco’s, even past Divinity Road, and up into the part of Oxford where the dreaming spires and their smelly undergrads seem very far away. I turn down a small side street, cycling past clumps of kids on their way home from school, turn again, and

I’m stopped by the piercing screech of a three-year-old child.

I park my bike, and soon after, a three-year-old girl comes hurtling out of a house and grabs my knees, yelling a garbled version of my name. Following closely behind is her sister, seven-year-old Fabiha, and then behind again, another sister, nine-year-old Farah. After I untangle myself from Fabiha’s baby sister, the four of us trundle inside a house where chaos reigns, and where once a week I act as tutor to Fabiha through the Jacari programme.

Although Jacari began at the University of Oxford in 1956 as the Joint Action Committee Against Racial Intolerance, it is now an educational programme that focuses on schoolchildren in the Oxford community. Children who are part of families only recently arrived in the UK, and who are having problems with their schoolwork, are identified by their schoolteachers as requiring special assistance. Through Jacari, Oxford University students volunteer their time, and are matched-up with a child who requires extra help. A variety of subjects are covered, and the children are of all ages. Not only are these children trying to learn English at the same time as they learn their normal schoolwork, but more often than not there are no adults at home to help them with their new language and their homework. Frequently, their parents are also struggling with English, as well as with a new culture.

When I first met Fabiha a few years ago, she was having trouble reading and learning to write. Her mother speaks no English, and her father is often away working. I soon realized that not only were there few English books in her house, but that the person who was helping her to read at night was her older sister, Farah. In the notebook where a schoolchild’s parents are to log what they read each night for the schoolteacher to see, I found the awkward writing of seven-year-old Farah. Farah had just learned to read and write English a few years before.

When I visit Fabiha at her house, we spend the time reading books together, playing word games, and writing stories. For Fabiha’s family, whatever she is doing at home involves all of the other children there too. Farah reads me stories she has written that day, and draws me pictures. Their baby sister sits on my lap, grabbing my hair and drooling on my shirt. Six-year-old cousin Shaira is also there, following along in the books, as is her noisy baby brother, who likes to run screaming around the room and to run-
mage through my bag. Every few weeks we walk to the local library, where we have all registered for library cards. The first time the girls received their library cards, their eyes opened wide with excitement when they learned how many books they could borrow, and all for free. We have gone for trips to the museums in Oxford, reading about dinosaurs and ancient cultures before we go, and eating ice cream as a treat afterwards.

These may sound like small pleasures, and things that most students at Oxford take for granted. We probably all grew up in homes where reading and learning was a natural and encouraged part of our lives, where books abounded and a trip to a museum wasn’t anything extraordinary. Yet these things do not spring up naturally in one’s life, and especially not when one moves to a foreign country. To me, this is one of the most delightful things about Jacari: students can share the things that they already love and enjoy, and watch as children come to love them as well. In a few years, young children make great leaps. Farah wants to be a writer, and now reads long stories with chapters. Farah wants to be a writer, and now reads long stories with chapters. Farah wants to be a writer, and now reads long stories with chapters. Fabiha used to declare she hated reading, and tried to avoid reading out loud for fear of failure. Now she carefully and clearly reads through entire books to me, proud of her accomplishment.

In turn, I have been welcomed into Fabiha’s life and family. Her mother cooks me something wonderful and spicy after I am done teaching, and her grandmother and aunts smile broadly at me while we all eat. When I cycle back to my work after seeing Fabiha, my research is once again fresh and interesting. I remember again how wonderful it is to discuss ideas with other academics, and to learn new things. Most importantly, though, I remember that life is not simply who has written how many chapters of his or her thesis, or academic back-stabbing, or getting JRFs. Oxford is not just a university town, something that is very easy to forget when we live as students in the centre of it. We may remember that there are many people in the world who require help, and that there are cultures and lifestyles different from our own in far-flung countries. We shouldn’t forget that we live as part of a community with these differences right here in Oxford, and that it is in the small actions and individual relationships that communities are built.

For more information on Jacari, please contact Erica (Linacre rep) at erica.charters@linacre.ox.ac.uk
The supermarket shelf boasts a selection of well-travelled vegetables: green beans from Kenya; asparagus from Peru; baby corn from Thailand. I feel slightly sorry for the young carrots that have journeyed here only from Holland. Such a constant availability of global produce is something to which we have grown accustomed. Unfortunately we have simultaneously become ignorant to the consequences of the “convenience”.

Felicity Lawrence (consumer affairs correspondent for the Guardian and author of ‘Not on the Label’ - a powerful book that details how a handful of retailers and food manufacturers exert unprecedented control over what we eat and where we buy it) has some alarming facts at her disposal. Apparently it takes 88 calories in the form of fuel energy to fly 1 calorie of carrot to the UK from South Africa! We are essentially eating oil. The miles clocked up by the food on our plates are having a significant impact on climate change, contributing up to 20% of greenhouse gas emissions. They are also taking their toll in other less obvious ways. Long distance transport leads to loss in nutritional content. In fact, the vitamin content of frozen broccoli, peas, sweet-corn and carrots are often significantly higher than in their ‘fresh’ counterparts imported from Spain, Turkey and Israel. Furthermore, retailers select varieties that will travel and keep well, often at the compromise of taste...and ripeness: fruit that must journey thousands of miles to reach us must be picked hard.

Thankfully, more and more farms and local producers are offering the opportunity to escape the absurdity of a system that imports from the other side of the globe when we could be eating our own season’s produce. As well as several local markets, there are now at least five Organic Vegetable Delivery ‘Box Schemes’ in place that deliver to the Oxford area. In fact, one of these - Tolhurst Organic - delivers to Linacre College. I decided to try them out. Two emails later I was told that my vegetable bag would be ready for collection from college on Thursday evening. For £7.25 I received 1.5 kg potatoes, 4 large carrots, 4 onions, a baby gem lettuce, 200 g mushrooms, a bag of both fresh spinach and leaf beet and a ‘ridge’ cucumber: “The same as a regular one but with better flavour,” Tolly the farmer informed me when I emailed him to discover the identity of this large gherkin-like vegetable.

...it takes 88 calories in the form of fuel energy to fly 1 calorie of carrot to the UK from South Africa

Tolhurst Organic Farm, located between Oxford and Reading, deliver to college every Thursday evening. They offer three vegetable selections: a small bag of 5-7 items that costs £5.50; a medium bag containing 6-8 items for £7.25 and a large bag with at least 10 items for £10. Potatoes, carrots and onions feature throughout the year and additional items depend on season and availability, with the greatest selection appearing between July and November. Fruit bags can also be ordered, priced at £3.50, £5.50 and £9 and containing apples, oranges and bananas; some times kiwi, pears, avocado, nectarines and grapes. While not all the fruit is grown locally by Tolhurst,
they endeavour to limit food miles by selecting from the UK or continental Europe. I was delighted with my first bag: the quality and flavour of the veg was exceptional.

The benefits of such a scheme are numerous-a healthy and convenient option that further presents the opportunity to support the local environment and try something new (I cannot recall ever seeing leaf beet in the supermarket). “And what about the cost?” you ask. Organic farming is more expensive: more farm staff are required to control weeds and crop yields tend to be lower. But when compared to the supermarket organic prices, the cost of my first vegetable bag seems very reasonable. Indeed, I don’t believe that it was much more expensive than the equivalent non-organic selection would be.

The Linacre scheme is brilliant- efficiently organised and flexible, with no obligation to set up a regular order (order as and when you want). The easiest way to do so is by handing in your cash at reception- in an envelope with your name and order written on the front. Orders for the Thursday delivery must be received by 1 pm on Monday.

If you are interested but want more details, email Dominique Chaput (dominique.chaput@linacre.ox.ac.uk).

...to discover the identity of this large gherkin-like vegetable.

“I eat merely to put food out of my mind.”

N.F. Simpson
Dimka entered the night as a storm might have stirred by an urge to mobilize, his eyes snapped open like two flashes of lightning. He arose and launched himself into the heady black outdoors with the sweeping alacrity of a powerful wind, pausing only to unhitch his horse.

The air was heavy with earth. Tolya cut through the dustiness with animal precision, his glossy back glinting with salty vitality. The trail they followed, plainly visible in night’s golden hues, was a dappled brown and tan bordered by the nocturnal manifestation of Spring’s splurging; tall billowing white grasses birthed proud silver trees, and the occasional Russian sage bounced humble blue light from the teardrop moon. Dimka looked down for a moment, just in front of the melodic hooves, and marveled that each arching tree branch was granted a mirrored existence in night’s sharp shadows. In the distance the Yablonovyy Mountains jutted defiantly into the obsidian sky like knuckles of a beast pushing from inside Earth’s womb. Dimka stroked his companion vigorously, fervently whispering ‘Tolya my friend, you are right to move so quickly. Never before have I felt the expansiveness I now feel, and never before has such wanderlust welled inside me! Tonight we press all boundaries—we drive outward!’ Tolya’s legs moved with the grace and urgency of a steam engine making up for lost time; in their wake, claws of dusty turbulence writhed like drunken serpents.

After several hours the moonlit pair descended upon a sleeping town. The village looked strangely dead and almost ghostly; the starry sky rendered homes frozen in time like once-active animals stuck in resin or preserved in formaldehyde.

The sight of the village drenched Dimka in memories of Ira. She was very young when they first met, and he remembered being entranced by her burgeoning femininity. Excited parents had introduced the couple during tea on a summer day; Dimka recalled his father, Fadeyushka, winking at him in his comical way and then placing Ira’s small hands inside Dimka’s. They were children and had little idea what a handshake meant, but they were not blind to the magic of their meeting. Dimka tasted an effervescent bubbling under his skin and felt as if he might explode in elation. From the moment they met, something changed, something in the air perhaps, or maybe something in the earth. Dimka often walked into the village from his parents’ province and wandered with Ira into youthful seclusion. They climbed trees, walked barefoot through moss, and took naps together.

Dimka’s voice climbed softly into her delicate ear:
‘Ira, I have come!’

Now, twenty years later, Tolya instinctively veered toward Ira’s cottage as if by a potent unseen force. Once arrived at the familiar white stone patio, Dimka directed his gaze skyward toward Ira’s room. There, amidst all the blanched tones in this cluster of civili-
zation, Ira’s rounded face glowed with the radiance of plain love.

Dimka’s voice climbed softly into her delicate ear: ‘Ira, I have come!’

Within moments she burst from the house, iridescent with exhilaration and expectation. Even before the embrace, Ira seemed to envelop and be enveloped by Dimka all at once. She deftly leapt onto Tolya and into Dimka’s arms, pressing a florid cheek into her lover’s back and winding her arms like wild vines around (and around) his waist. With a nudge, Tolya rode East beyond town and beyond boundaries.

Now that everything was moving, now that Ira and the wind were both preening his back, Dimka was overcome with rapture. The trail was no longer dusty, but shadows were longer than before. Ira’s hair billowed behind them in a silken cloud. Her blue eyes gazed forward and her small bare feet pressed at Tolya’s sides. She wore a pastel dress, light pinks, lilac purples, and sage blues, that modestly dipped beneath her dimpled chin to reveal curves rising forth like gentle swells upon a glassy sea. Everything about her Dimka had always noticed; even now, although Ira rode behind him, he inhaled her qualities. His beaming open mouth led the way into the evening air, while, with pelting sounds like muted raindrops, his gleaming teeth filtered nocturnal insects from entrapment within his heaving chest. The lulling rhythm of Tolya’s gait was musical in its ardor; Ira and Dimka were synchronized to this same tune, and together enjoyed the sound of powerful hooves moving over quiet earth.

Motion was a panacea. They travelled all night.

The sun rose yellow and poured over the countryside like expensive maple syrup. Ira and Dimka marveled at the richness.

With new light came new sights: mountains loomed in the distance like rolling pins covered in black liquorice and icing sugar, their massive size dominating the landscape and conveying to the couple a certain pressing urgency to continue moving. Nature exuded such poise that often Dimka could not help but feel pocket-sized; his presence seemed transient or fleeting, and his desire to travel and to move was heightened. At that moment, he strongly felt that only through dynamic motion could he achieve a more permanent existence.

‘Trees and grasses sway lazily,’ he said breathlessly, ‘and clouds clamber along their paths while the moon slowly crawls, yet I know as long as you and I exist so shall they. Clouds can relax, for even in relaxed inactivity the landscape and skyscape have a perpetual essence. We differ, Ira: a hundred years hence, lofty clouds shall breeze by and find us again upward staring but then with our eyes carefully shut and our bodies embedded in Earth’s soft hands. Knowing this is to come, what else can we do but move? Movement is the only gift later retracted.’

Ira smiled like an upside-down rainbow, silent and surprisingly still.
Put on your shades, sonny. We’re gonna catch ourselves some sun!
Fantastic sunny spots

1. Linacre College Garden
2. University Parks
3. Wolfson meadow
4. Port Meadow
5. Christ Church Meadow
6. Botanic Garden
7. Headington Hill Park
   (Shakespeare in the Park, visit: creationtheatre.co.uk)

Great pubs with beer gardens

8. Rose & Crown
9. Royal Oak
10. Perch Inn
11. Jude the Obscure
12. Turf
13. Head of the River
14. Isis Tavern
15. The Trout

Punting

16. Wolfson College
   (Linacre Punt)
17. Magdalen Bridge boathouse
18. Folly Bridge Punts

Yummilicious Ice Cream

19. George & Davies Ice Cream Parlour
20. George and Danver Ice Cream Parlour
Some of you might have noticed the ‘Henry Wellcome Ancient Biomolecules Centre’ on Museum Road (opposite the Oxford University Museum of Natural History) and wondered what it’s all about. The research that is conducted in this centre involves the extraction of ‘ancient DNA’, which is a term used to refer to any DNA obtained from preserved remains. This includes extinct animals (such as woolly mammoths, sabre-toothed cats, and the dodo) as well as ancient humans (for example, Peruvian mummies and the remains of genocide victims). Due to the nature of our research, we occasionally receive very odd requests from members of the public. Below, we provide a sample of some of the more outlandish requests:

Two ladies flew over from Italy to inquire about the possibility of cloning their dead pet cats. Unfortunately, they had to be told that the technology was not yet available, and that it would be best for them to store their beloved pets in their home freezer.

From a researcher in New Zealand: ‘I am in possession of my husband’s family genealogy that I have traced back to the gods. I would very much like to send you hair samples of four generations of my husband’s family for you to DNA to establish if the hobbit-sized human could also be descendants of the gods’.

From a researcher in Canterbury: ‘Would you be interested in the possibility of assisting with ancient DNA recovery? The blood samples...are from the Shroud kept in Turin. The idea is to eventually compare for a match with the Tomb of the Holy Sepulchre Church, Jerusalem – the blood of Jesus of Nazareth. If the Shroud and potential Tomb samples match, you will realise the implications’.

Someone in China sent us several photographs of rocks, which he wanted to sell to us because he claimed they contained very ancient DNA. We refused on the basis that the rocks were clearly igneous (formed by volcanic activity), but were then told that we ‘do not have the imagination or creative skill’ (something might have been lost in translation).

Apart from these inquiries, we frequently receive abusive messages from anti-evolutionists. In fact, we were recently sent a 7,000 word essay entitled ‘Eureka! Evolution is entirely false!’ which threw us into immediate despair about the validity of our research. Unfortunately, morale in our research group is already low due to our fear of the ‘curse of Ötzi’: several lab members have been working on DNA from the 5,000-year-old body of Ötzi the Iceman (a.k.a. ‘Frozen Fritz’) whose remains were discovered in an Alpine glacier in 1991. Eight researchers associated with Ötzi have died so far. Ötzi’s sixth ‘victim’, the archaeologist Konrad Spindler, ridiculed the curse in the months before his death: ‘I think it’s a load of rubbish. It is all media hype. The next thing you will be saying I will be next’.

On the other hand, we sometimes receive messages of support: ‘Hello, we are Overman. Overman is a band that writes many of its songs about science, skepticism, and critical thinking … the song “Evolution Rocks” … is our gift to you, the advocates of science.’ And that makes it all worthwhile.
Since the theme is Journeys, I thought I could write about my thoughts about our place in the world, and how globalization and technology innovation is bringing the world closer together.

Flying from country to country is part of everyday life for me, just like going to get groceries for most people. That probably explains why leaving Oxford and moving to a rural town of 1700 inhabitants in Spain, away from my family and friends, will not be daunting to me.

There are several notable changes in the way we travel and communicate that has brought me closer to my afaraway friends and family. These changes have also allowed us to learn more about other cultures. First is the cost of flying. Second is the cost of mobile communication.

Not long ago, our parents’ generation used telegraphs. In our generation, the landline and mobile phones are prevalent. Within the last few years we saw the proliferation of new technologies that allow us to stay connected - blackberries, skype, sms...

Third is the widespread use of the Internet. The Internet has empowered global citizens to publish and share their experiences with one another. From virtualtourist.com, which other tourists provide information and tips on travel destinations, to wikipedia, which is a site that aims to provide knowledge about nearly everything to all, we have more information available to us than ever before.

These few changes have made the world a smaller place

From my new home in Spain, I can access the Internet, call my family, and watch satellite TV broadcasted from China. The larger implication of all this is that we are able to reach out to the rest of the world faster and easier.
The Carbon College: Linacre leading the way as the first climate neutral Oxbridge college.

It’s a grand thing to say that Linacre has taken the lead in changing the way things are being done in Oxford. But by becoming the first climate-neutral college in nearly 900 years of education at the oldest English-speaking university in the World, Linacre has led the way in what we believe is an inevitable sea change within academic institutions towards a more climate-friendly future. Admittedly the carbon impact of the university 890 years ago isn’t what it is today, but the decision for Linacre to take responsibility for its carbon emissions shows that the traditional (anti-Quated?) systems of Oxford can be dynamic enough to respond to contemporary and future problems, and that with the will, things can change.

Going ‘climate neutral’

The idea for going ‘climate neutral’ followed some discussions about the college becoming the first Oxford college to gain Fair Trade status, and the idea that it would be good to offset the carbon from flights that the college was making, particularly related to the Advancing Linacre 40 years capital campaign. But it struck us that if we think offsetting the flights is a good idea, why not go all the way and make the college properly take account of its impact on the climate? We set about contacting the relevant people and organising meetings to see if this idea had legs, and then put together the information and wrote the CR Exec motion about going ‘climate neutral’. We put the motion to the common room; it passed with only one vote against, and showed that the CR was serious about the issue, agreeing to half of the costs. We knew then that we had the groundswell of support from you to take the motion successfully through the development and finance committees and then finally onto Governing body, where it was decided that Linacre would go through a process of reducing its domestic emissions, and buy offsets for those that could not be reduced. This was agreed for an initial term of three years, with an annual review, and also passed virtually unanimously amongst the fellows of the college. The motion apparently sent Governing body into more debate and action than people had seen in quite a while (that is, of course, until the new building motion came forward – but that’s another story).

the first climate-neutral college in nearly 900 years of education at the oldest English-speaking university in the World

What does it mean?

Essentially, becoming a climate neutral college means that the college is going to account for every tonne of carbon dioxide that it produces through its domestic and academic activities (heating, electricity, the running of the Linacre vehicle, flights etc.). This means that the college will look at what it is spending on energy, gas etc. and try to find ways of reducing its consumption. Once we have reduced as much as possible, the remaining tonnes of CO2 that are produced will be offset by buying carbon credits from the Oxford-based company, Climate Care. The credits are produced through financing carbon reduction projects in developing countries – these include installing improved cooking stoves in Honduras and Bangladesh,
efficient light bulbs in South Africa, and reforesting parts of Uganda (see: www.climatecare.org). We are the first Oxbridge college to take full account of our emissions in this way.

Why bother?

It seems a lot of hassle to do this, why should we bother? Well, first of all, its great to be the first one to do this. Indeed, the Guardian noted that the decision to go climate neutral made Linacre “a beacon for universities and colleges across the country that are becoming increasingly active in the face of climate change” (June 14, 2006), and we have even had interest from across the pond where US universities are taking action on climate change. And of course, we shouldn’t forget the local coverage we have had in the Oxford Mail and on BBC Oxford radio (even if the latter was on at 6:20am!). All of this publicity means that the name of Linacre is getting out into the wider world, and cementing our place in the Oxford college ecosystem as a progressive, responsive college that can tackle these sorts of issues head on.

We’re not just producing academics in fields of environmental and social importance, but actually taking action on these problems. In a world where companies and individuals are increasingly taking environmental credentials into account, Linacre’s new status puts us in a good position for engaging these new economies; something that the Development office may certainly be able to use in fundraising for the college, and something which we can all be proud of for voting and passing through in our time at the college. Unfortunately, it does not look like climate change is going away, so what the Common Room did this year is make a statement about the present situation, and set a precedent that future administrations at Linacre should be taking the issue seriously. I think you can all be proud of being part of that legacy.

What’s Fair Trade all about?

Fair Trade is a growing, international movement which ensures that producers in poor countries get a fair deal. This means a fair price for their goods (one that covers the cost of production and guarantees a living income), long-term contracts which provide real security; and for many, support to gain the knowledge and skills that they need to develop their businesses and increase sales.

For more information please see http://www.fairtrade.org.uk or http://www.maketradefair.com

What’s Linacre doing?

If our application for ‘Fairtrade’ status (the eagle eyed among you may have noticed that fair and trade have coalesced, this is because the Fairtrade Foundation, the awarding body require that it is spelt this way) is successful, then Linacre would become the first Fairtrade Oxford college. We would join 22 other HE institutions that are currently certified.

Watch the Environmental notice board for development of the story

How can we get involved?

Linacre already stocks a good range of Fairtrade products, but it would be nice to diversify still further. The kitchen and bar have both recently gone Fairtrade bananas!

It would be great if students and staff supported such initiatives and suggested new ones of their own. If you have any comments we would like to hear from you.

http://www.linacre.ox.ac.uk/~common/exec.html
What inspired you to take this photo?

It seems that whenever it snows in Oxford, the city becomes filled with photographers keen to capture as many images as possible before it melts.

How long have you been taking composed photographs?

Since I was given a digital camera, three years ago.

What is your favourite type of photography, and why do you love it?

I like to take photographs of buildings, because I like the lines and shadows. I would love to do wildlife photography but I don’t have the patience.

What is the most valuable piece of advice you would give to budding photographers everywhere?

A simple piece of advice would be: Learn how to focus your camera manually, rather than relying on the automatic function. Also, I generally avoid using flash because it tends to destroy natural colours.

To see your photograph in the next issue of Linacre Lines, send an electronic copy of your photograph to lines@linacre.ox.ac.uk
Firstly what came to my mind while I was thinking about how to describe my country to you was: it’s so little but such a cute country (at least for me)! But perhaps I need to give you a few more details in order to persuade you to visit…

Since January 1st 1993, Slovakia has been an independent state and has slowly been developing its worldwide status. It is a pity that we are still some way behind our “bigger” Czech brother, but hopefully that might change in the next few years. Indeed, on May 1st 2004, we became a member of the EU.

Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, is the political, administrative, cultural and industrial centre of the country; all main offices and ministries are located here. This old yet modern city lies 
along the bank of the river Danube.

If you like nature, then Slovakia is the right place for you. More than 40% of Slovak landscape is covered by woodland. The country offers a selection of nine national parks, each presenting an array of nature, fresh air, wild animals and beautiful caves. And if you are seeking a romantic and peaceful destination for a holiday, the Slovak mountains are ideal. In the winter season, you can also take advantage of the opportunity to ski. Donovaly, located in the middle of Slovakia, is one of the biggest centres for winter sport. Amongst other things, Donovaly offers good skiing terrain, nice accommodation in mountain hotels, a snowboarding school and a great atmosphere at the dogsledding race.

And what if you are stressed and need some rest? No problem: we have about 1300 localities with mineral and thermal springs at spas such as Piestany or Sliac. Slovak mineral water brings pleasure, prevention and recovery...

Feeling hungry? “Bryndzove halusky” is Slovakia’s most popular cheese speciality: potato dumplings covered by special sheep’s cheese “bryndza” and with smoked bacon (by the way, my mum makes the best halusky of all!) Oh, I nearly forgot! Take a strong spirit “Slivovica” (plum brandy) as the aperitif and finish your dinner with Slovak wine or traditional beer. And now take your good mood and let’s go into the streets among young Slovak people who are always ready for entertainment, music and dance. Or you can enjoy Slovak singers and music bands on stages in various bigger or smaller towns.

I hope to have convinced you that Slovakia is a fabulous country. Magical historic sights combine with cordial people, traditional music and Slovak gastronomy to give the ideal ingredients for a wonderful stay in Slovakia. And while the country may be small in size, its greatness lies in its beauty.

Seeya there guys!
Pool cuppers is a little bit like the champions league, except that it isn't shown on ITV and is probably a bit more exciting. The Linacre team started out in a group with 5 other teams, one of which, St Catz, was seeded for the competition due to finishing 2nd in the league competition of Michaelmas term. The winning teams from the 10 groups, plus the 6 highest scoring 2nd placed teams then go through to a knock-out competition. The format for each match consists of teams of six players, with each player playing two frames.

We started out in fine fashion, with a comfortable 8-4 win over Worcester – Roland Young playing some very flashy shots in order to win his frames. This was followed by a 9-3 decimation of Mansfield, at which Adam Gamsa's lucky trousers made their first appearance, Doug Creager comprehensively hustled their captain and Jon Home used his massive experience to make his opponents look rather foolish. Next up were Jesus, who gave us tough match. Rob Devereux’s mis-spent youth stood him in good stead to win his frames, but at 4-6 down things weren't looking good. However Russell Ewings and Chris Higham both won their crucial frames to take it to a decider, which Russell then managed to win to make it 7-6.

We then travelled to Merton and comfortably put them away 8-4 to set up a group-deciding match with St Catz, or so we thought. A bit of maths led us to realise that as long as the score line was relatively close both teams would qualify, and amazingly that’s exactly what happened (cough cough). This marked the first time that Linacre had ever qualified for the latter stages of cuppers!!

In our last-16 match we were drawn against the number 3 seeds, Exeter. James Nightingale rocketed through his frames with a speed and flair which was too much for his hapless Exeter opponents. Once again we came to a position of being 4-6 down, with an increasingly packed Exeter bar providing a pressure cooker – like atmosphere.

However cometh the hour, cometh the man, and Tom Wrobel played a frame that was so...
In Hilary term Linacre netball team played in division 3 of 5. Our first match of the term was against Balliol and they beat us by a large goal difference. They did however say that we were the friendliest team that they had played against so it wasn’t all unsuccessful! We suffered a few more defeats but then... we won a game against Worcester- HOORAY! This match was played on a Sunday so it may be true to say that a few of our team were perhaps a little worse for wear from the Saturday night but the hangovers obviously did not hinder us too much!

After this, things were on the up and we managed to win 2 more games (actually we won these by default when the other teams didn’t turn up to play but hey, this is a minor detail!). Unfortunately this wasn’t enough to stop us from being relegated with Mansfield ahead of us by one point on goal difference. But with every cloud there is a silver lining—moving down to division 4 means we should be able to win a few games next season! I would like to thank the whole team for their eternal optimism through both seasons;

We suffered a few more defeats but then...

the general attitude of a big effort in each game and at the same time having fun made the games very enjoyable. Special thanks go to Hilary Burch for umpiring and getting our very groovy personalised netball T-shirts made.

Next year the captain will be Sian Alexander and if anyone is interested in playing, the new sign up sheet will be on the sports notice board at the beginning of Michaelmas term 2006 or you can sign up at the Linacre freshers fair in October- Any standard welcome!
Summer Doodles

Why forget how fantastic the summer is. Doodle your summer feelings here, drop it off at reception, and relive this summer come Michaelmas. Your doodles could star as the cover for the next Linacre LINES.
Best Black & White Entry
Linacre Photography Competition 2006

by Nicholas Hinde
One Lonely Petal

What is this I find,
Entered into my life
From this field of hay.
A single petal,
Red and blushed it is,
Laid upon the ground
To be embraced
By gentle finger tips.
How was it that it came to me?
This one sweet single petal?
I search for the flower
From which it was born,
Not finding it at all.
Nothing I find within this field
Could have produced this thing,
Of such beauty it is.
Only the seeded heads of the grasses
Nod at me in acknowledgment,
Of its presence.
Gently holding this petal,
Close to this beaten heart.
Lay my head upon the ground
To dream

- Brian Rosenberg